

**CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
August 21, 2002
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA**

The meeting of the California High-Speed Rail Authority was called to order on August 21 at 10:22 a.m. at Fresno City Hall, 2600 Fresno Street, Fresno, California.

Members Present: Rod Diridon, Chairperson
 Fran Florez, Vice Chairperson
 Joseph E. Petrillo

Members Absent: Jerry Epstein, Vice Chairperson
 Dr. Ernest A. Bates
 Ben L. Hom
 William E. Leonard
 T.J. Stapleton
 Leland Wong

Approval of Minutes for July 17, 2002 Meeting

Chairperson Diridon presented the minutes for approval. Due to the absence of a quorum, the July 17, 2002 meeting minutes were considered and recommended for approval by the members present, sitting as a Committee of the Whole.

Authority Members' Meetings for Compensation

Chairperson Diridon presented the list of meetings for compensation for approval. Due to the absence of a quorum, the list of meetings for compensation were considered and recommended for approval by the members present, sitting as a Committee of the Whole.

Public Comment

Roger Montero, Deputy Mayor of Fresno

Mr. Montero welcomed the Authority to Fresno. He expressed his support and enthusiasm for the proposed high-speed rail project.

Jerry Haynes, Deputy City Manager of Fresno

Mr. Haynes recognized the many elected representatives in the audience.

Bob Waterston, Supervisor of Fresno County

Supervisor Waterston welcomed the Authority to Fresno. He expressed his support for the proposed high-speed rail project.

MaryAlice Kaloostian, Senator Poochigian

On behalf of Senator Poochigian and Senator Costa, District Director MaryAlice Kaloostian presented a resolution to Edward P. Graveline, former Vice-Chairperson of the High-Speed Rail Authority, thanking him for his four years of exemplary service to the State of California.

Susan Goode, Senator Costa

Ms. Goode thanked the Authority for having the meeting in the Senators' 16th district. She recognized Mayor Harvey Hall, City of Bakersfield who was in the audience. Ms. Goode read a letter from Senator Costa stating his support for the proposed high-speed rail system and providing an update on his legislation. SB1856, the Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act for the 21st Century. This

bill would put a bond measure on the November 2004 ballot. If approved by the voters, \$9 billion would be authorized to pay for the construction of the first leg of the high-speed train from San Francisco to Los Angeles. Amendments will add \$500 million for improvements to intercity and commuter rail lines that will provide passengers to the high-speed rail system. The measure is currently on the Suspense File in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. Tomorrow, the Committee will determine whether it gets off of Suspense and goes to the Assembly floor. While cautiously optimistic the bill will have enough votes to get the Committee, he encourages each member of the Authority to contact members of the Appropriations Committee and ask them to support SB1856.

Harvey Hall, Mayor of Bakersfield

Mayor Hall expressed his enthusiasm and support for the proposed high-speed rail system.

Daniel Ronquillo, Councilmember, City of Fresno

Councilmember expressed his enthusiasm and support for the proposed high-speed rail system.

Rick Norris, Councilmember, City of Palmdale

Councilmember Norris expressed his advocacy for the Antelope Valley and his enthusiasm and support for the proposed high-speed rail system.

Members Reports

Chairperson Diridon reported he gave approximately ten high-speed rail presentations in August. Vice Chairperson Florez reported she met with the San Joaquin Rail Committee last week.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Morshed reported on proposed and pending legislation pertaining to the Authority.

- SB1856 (Costa). This bill would provide for the issuance of a \$9 billion general obligation revenue bond for the purpose of funding the planning and construction of a high-speed train system in California. This bill was amended to include an additional \$500 million. This bill is currently on the Suspense File in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.
- SB796 (Costa). This bill would extend the Authority's sunset date beyond December 31, 2003. This bill is currently on the Suspense File in the Assembly Appropriations Committee and will probably be considered on Thursday, August 22.
- SB1799 (Poochigian) This bill would require that not less than 2 members of the Authority be residents of the San Joaquin Valley. This bill is currently on the Assembly Floor and waiting to be passed on to the Governor.

Executive Director Morshed reported the State Legislature has not passed the proposed state budget. When the Legislature passes the proposed state budget and the Governor approves the budget, staff will issue a Notice to Proceed to all the Consultants. However, due to the delay in the state budget, there will be a few weeks delay in the final product. Staff is in the process of submitting the fiscal year 2003-2004 budget request. The Department of Finance sent a directive to all State Agencies to reduce budget requests by 20%. The Authority will submit two options: one if the life of the Authority is extended beyond December 31, 2003 and, one if the life of the Authority is not extended.

Executive Director Morshed reported he and Chairperson Diridon will attend and deliver presentations at the International Network for Urban Development (INTA) International Conference in Marseilles, France October 20-23, and the Eurailspeed 2002 Conference in Spain, October 23-25. This out-of-country trip is awaiting the Governor's approval. However, if the trip is not approved, he and Chairperson Diridon will personally pay for the trip.

Executive Director Morshed reported the staff finally managed to promote Carrie Pourvahidi to a limited term position.

Executive Director Morshed reported on the Federal appropriations bills pertaining to the Authority. Thanks to Senator Feinstein, \$2 million is earmarked for high-speed rail in the Senate version of the budget. \$4.8 million is earmarked for high-speed rail in the house version of the budget due to Representative Matsui and approximately 19 of his colleagues.

San Joaquin Rail Committee Update

Supervisor Bob Waterston also serves as Fresno County's representative to the San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee. Supervisor Waterston delivered an overview of the presentation, emphasizing the desire and need for the Authority and the San Joaquin Rail Committee to cooperate and coordinate its efforts. Supervisor Waterston introduced Elizabeth O'Donoghue, Senior Director, Communications Public & Governmental Affairs of Amtrak. Ms. O'Donoghue presented the local goals for high-speed train service and provided an update on the current and future San Joaquin Rail Passenger Service improvement projects, highlighting the parallels between the proposed high-speed rail system and Amtrak's present service to the region. A copy of this presentation is available upon request.

Public Comment

Larry Miller, San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee

Mr. Miller thanked the Authority for meeting in Fresno and for having San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee, the City of Fresno and FARRC on the agenda.

Sacramento – Bakersfield Alignments Update

Deputy Director Carrie Pourvahidi thanked the City of Fresno, Fresno Council Of Governments, and Fresno Area Residents for Railroad Consolidation (FARRC) for all of their assistance in putting together today's meeting, she expressed appreciation for all of their help over the years and stated she looks forward to a long and productive relationship with them. She wished John Ferdinandi, Chair of FARRC, who was unable to attend today's meeting due to illness, a speedy recovery. Deputy Director Pourvahidi gave an overview of the presentation and introduced Rachel Vandenberg, Project Manager of DMJM Harris. Ms. Vandenberg delivered a presentation describing the high-speed train alignments for further evaluation between Sacramento and Bakersfield and gave an update of the engineering work underway in the region. A copy of this presentation is available upon request.

Public Comment

Alan Miller, Train Riders Association of California

Mr. Miller declined comment and referred to Mr. McNamara.

Dan McNamara, Vice President of Train Riders Association of California

Mr. McNamara expressed satisfaction with the Sacramento and Bakersfield presentation. Mr. McNamara expressed concern about the noise of the trains and suggested noise mitigation so that the noise would not impact the center cities.

City of Fresno Presentation

Clark Thompson, Fresno Council of Governments (COG) presented an overview of the planned revitalization of downtown Fresno and the progress of rail consolidation. The following City of Fresno and Fresno County representatives participated in this presentation:

- Bruce Rudd, General Manager of Fresno Area Express discussed the City of Fresno's transit system and downtown Fresno's intermodal center transportation network.

- Fred Burkhardt, Economic Development Coordinator of the City of Fresno discussed the economic impacts of downtown revitalization and the future impacts of high-speed rail.
- Tom Bailey, Vice President-Media & Public Relations of FARRC discussed Fresno rail consolidation and presented an update underlining the importance to the Fresno alignment for high-speed rail and the downtown intermodal depot.
- Clark Thompson, Rail Transportation Planner of Fresno COG discussed the updated study showing the feasibility and importance of Fresno rail consolidation.

A copy of this presentation is available upon request.

Public Comment

Alan Miller, Executive Director of Train Riders Association of California

Mr. Miller claimed the arguments in the mountain crossing study that eliminated the Altamont Pass only make sense if San Jose is considered the center of the Bay Area. He stated the Authority needs statewide leadership and a plan that is not focused on any particular region. Mr. Miller further claimed the Authority discounted its own study during the last Board meeting. Charles River and Associates compiled the ridership data and the study concluded that San Jose has less than half the ridership of San Francisco and the Peninsula. Mr. Miller asked if the future study will double the size of San Jose's ridership.

Executive Director Morshed responded to Mr. Miller's comment by stating that a screening decision to eliminate the Altamont Pass was made in late 1999. That decision was based on providing the most efficient operational service to the three major centers of the Bay Area - San Jose, Oakland and San Francisco. The conclusion was that it would be most efficient to come through the Pacheco Pass entering San Jose and through a 2-way fork serve Oakland and San Francisco. The ridership data that has guided and continues to guide this work is the data reflected in the Authority's business plan (year 2000).

Dan McNamara, Vice President of Train Riders Association of California

Mr. McNamara expressed his support for the Altamont Pass. He claimed a few things have changed since 1999:

1. We use to feel that service from San Francisco to Sacramento would be via tube or rail on the Bay Bridge. In April, The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) reported that it would cost \$11 billion for a tube and that is wasn't feasible to put rails on the bridge. Therefore, access from the Central Valley to San Francisco should be on a rebuilt Dumbarton Rail Bridge, which is the Altamont.
2. Given the tremendous traffic from Manteca to the Bay Area, Sacramento not being connected to San Francisco makes no sense.
3. The Authority does not have strong political support and is negatively received in Sacramento.

Chairperson Diridon indicated he never said San Jose was the center of the Bay Area. However he has noted the job concentration, which exists in the Silicon Valley. Chairperson Diridon stressed he was appointed to the Board after the decision on the Altamont Pass and therefore, was not involved in the screening decision.

Executive Director Morshed clarified:

1. The Authority put the Pacheco Pass back into play at the request of MTC. MTC fully supports the Pacheco Pass. At no time in the process of making the screening decision was there any discussion of the train going to Oakland on the Bay Bridge. The Authority never considered this as a possibility and it is not reflected in the Authority's Business Plan.
2. High-speed rail has strong political support from Sacramento and San Francisco. For example, Senator John Burton, represents San Francisco and serves as President Pro Tem of the Senate is a co-author of SB1856 - the Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act for the 21st Century.

Arnold Ramming, City of Bakersfield

Mr. Ramming expressed his support for the proposed high-speed rail project. The City of Bakersfield and Kern Council of Governments are working together to hire a consultant to study the three station locations being evaluated by the Authority.

Identification of Date and Location of Next Meeting

The next Authority Board meeting is scheduled on September 18, 2002 in Los Angeles, CA.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:37 p.m.